



School of Journalism & Mass Communications
Mass Communications 72: MEDIA & SOCIETY
Spring Semester, 2009

General Information

Professor:	Bob Rucker, Broadcast Journalism Coordinator
Office location:	Dwight Bentel Hall (DBH) 218
Telephone:	(408) 924-3272
Email:	professorrucker@yahoo.com
Office hours:	Drop In: Tu/Th 1:30-2:30pm or Anytime by appointment.
Class days/time:	Tuesdays only, 6 pm to 8:45pm Equivalent to a regular twice a week meeting class.
Classroom:	Dwight Bentel Hall (DBH) 133
Prerequisites:	SJSU general education option. Required of all all majors in the School Journalism and Mass Communications.
Course fees:	None.
Course website:	www.profbob.com

Course Description

MCOM 072. Mass Communication and Society. Mass communications and its relationship to society. Basic theories in mass communication, contemporary issues and milestones in our understanding of media effects. Prerequisite: Not repeatable for credit if equivalent course has been taken elsewhere. Repeatable for credit.

Mass Communications 72 - Student Learning Objectives

To successfully complete this course, students must:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of and the ability to apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of professional ethical principles and the ability to work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
5. Demonstrate the ability to think critically, creatively and independent.

Readings and Equipment Requirements

Textbook

Media & Culture, An Introduction to Mass Communications, 6th edition, by Richard Campbell, Christopher R. Martin and Bettina Fabos. Bedford/St. Martin, 2008.
ISBN -10:-0-312-45586-0 and ISBN - 13:978 0-312-45586-6.

Student must also purchase a **paper binder and include all assigned written assignments as part of their JAM Reports** (see details under 'Grading.'). Binders will be collected by the instructor periodically for review and assessment. Binders will be permanently collected at the end of the semester and used to demonstrate to university officials that each MCOM 72 student has met basic general education writing requirements.

Computer & software requirements

MCOM 72 will make regular use of online news and information sources for required class discussions. Students must familiarize themselves with a wide range of reliable website and take the initiative daily in checking on late breaking news and current events.

Overview: This is a lower division, mass media entry level overview of the history, purpose, strategies, and impact in our society of the various forms of the communications including television, radio, the internet, movies, the music industry, newspapers, magazines, advertising and public relations. Also included is a brief introductory review of the laws, regulatory agencies and ethical standards which affect the operation of each medium or media company.

NOTE: Prof. Rucker's section of MCOM 72 involves and requires a very interactive discussion of issues and current events. Students must come to each class informed and prepared to contribute specific facts, information and opinions requested. Perfect attendance is irrelevant to the student class participation assessment. Each individual student's oral and verbal contributions will be evaluated for the course grade.

MCOM 72: Grading (Prof. Rucker's Section)

1. CLASS PARTICIPATION. (30%) How well students individually volunteer to discuss timely issues and information related to course assigned topics and materials.

Students must demonstrate their knowledge by expressing their understanding and perspectives on the media and current events which affect society. There is no "one" right opinion or viewpoint. Multiple perspectives are expected. Students must be open to listening and learning from alternative points of view and interpretations. Students also show respect for one another and refrain from using inappropriate language during class settings. No personal attacks are ever allowed. A lively and candid exchange of views is expected every class period. Don't hold back. Expect unannounced oral and written current events/issues quizzes in class.

Periodically, professionals working in a wide range of media fields will be **GUEST SPEAKERS** in class. Most will speak to timely events and/or the decision-making and thinking in their fields. Guests will be announced as soon as their schedules will permit confirmation of campus visits. **Students must do research in advance on the individual, their business and/or industry, and come to all guest lecture sessions with 5 typed questions for the guest (who may call on students at random). These typed questions will be collected and recorded as proof of research effort and class participation.** Lists of questions are not graded. Always be prepared and work to impress. Remember...Guest speakers sometimes invite students to apply for internships and media related jobs. To be relieved of any class participation session, students must receive an excused absence from the instructor prior to the class meeting. Students must ask for an excused absence and never expect one. Students may be asked to present support evidence (i.e. medical note or official document) before an excused absence may be granted.

2. Assigned Readings Exams. (3 total = 30% of overall grade) Multiple choice/true-false exam questions on the assigned chapter readings only, not class discussion or JAMS.

Expect no make-up opportunities. Students should keep a record of letter grades earned on the tests. Expect no running updates on overall grade status in MCOM 72. Students must take exams during the class session in which they are registered. They may not opt to take the exam in another section's class. No student is allowed to take any exam later without prior approval by the instructor who may require support evidence (i.e. medical note or official document) before an excused absence may be granted.

3. JAM Reports – Journals Analyzing Media. (40% of grade. University G.E. requirement).

Students must offer in writing weekly evaluations and assessment of a wide range of class assigned media topics, examples, news events, or website materials. All reports must be typed. Handwritten efforts receive no credit. Students must meet basic writing standards for JAM Reports or student efforts will receive no credit. All reports must be kept in a paper binder, specified by the

instructor, and reports must be kept in order throughout the semester. Once reports are written, discussed and/or reviewed, students may not make any changes or remove reports. That would automatically result in an overall failing grade assessment for this part of the overall grade. Full compliance with all JAM report writing guidelines is expected and required. JAM Report letter grades may be reduced for any violation. No make-ups or substitutions are allowed. Do each assignment correctly the first time. Spelling, grammar and fact errors are not acceptable and can lower overall JAM grades. Student views or opinions expressed in JAMS are never judged or graded. Presenting different, and sometimes controversial points of view is expected.

General Advisory for All MCOM 72 Students

CLASS CONDUCT. Ideally, MCOM 72 class sessions should always involve lively exchanges of points of view along with explanations of media related history, practices, and information. Strong points of view are encouraged and should be seen as a new insight into how passionate people can differ on issues. These strong expressions, however, should never be offered as personal attacks.

Students are being taught in a “real world” learning model which follows basic professional standards for proper conduct. This includes the following standards and expectations: accuracy and truth, respect for different points of view, openness to new ideas, approaches and perspectives, good listening skills, and innovative and creative verbal and writing efforts measured by critical thinking, ethics and good judgment. Media professionals know this is the best way to earn the public’s trust and to keep it through consistent, responsible actions. Shortcuts are potentially dangerous and not acceptable.

MCOM 72 students, in and outside of class, must always conduct themselves accordingly. Asking for special privileges could be interpreted as a violation of this honor code of conduct. Such requests are acceptable. Anyone who cannot operate within the proper guidelines of “professional conduct,” as listed above, may be instructed to leave the class. Major violations of the professional code of conduct by individual or groups of students could result in those students forfeiting their overall MCOM 72 grade, and/or being recommended for expulsion from the School of Journalism and Mass Communications. Honorable conduct is never negotiable.

Specified graded assignments in Professor Rucker’s class, the readings exams and the JAM Report folders, are graded based on the San Jose State University’s grade point system:

grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
grade point	4.0	3.7	3.3	3.0	2.7	2.3	2.0	1.7	1.3	1.0	0.7	0



Campus Policies

A. Academic Integrity Statement

"Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University's Integrity Policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Judicial Affairs." The policy on academic integrity can be found at:

http://sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html

To plagiarize is to "steal and use (the ideas or writings of another) as one's own." (American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language. 1975). You are committing plagiarism if you:

- Copy phrases, sentences, or passages from electronic or print sources (journal articles, the web, etc.) into your own papers and reports without giving credit by citing the original source
- Quote someone else's exact words without giving credit to the original author
- Use someone else's specific ideas even if you restate them in your own words.

Citing your sources properly helps to avoid plagiarism. (See http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct)

SJSU regards plagiarism as academic dishonesty. Consequences include academic and other sanctions such as "grade modification."

Make clear which ideas are yours and which are someone else's...don't use words or images in a way that violates the creator's rights to them.

(Plagiarism and fabrication are violations of the ethical standards of the journalism profession. In addition to plagiarizing sources, outright fabrication is equally dangerous territory for journalists. This includes making up sources and attributing information to non-existent people or printed matter.)

B. Campus policy in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act

"If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with the DRC to establish a record of their disability."

C. You are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, withdrawals, incompletes, classroom behavior, and other policies found at http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct. Also, please read the SJSU catalog thoroughly.

University Policy S01-13, San José State University's *Policy of Commitment to a Campus Climate That Values Diversity and Equal Opportunity*, replaces University Policy S91-1 and affirms that San José State University (SJSU) is committed to maintaining an environment free from discrimination and harassment in compliance with all laws on non-discrimination, equal employment opportunity and affirmative action. Furthermore, the university community has a responsibility to advocate inclusion, respect, and understanding at a level above that which is minimally required by law.

For a full description, view [SJSU Campus Climate Policy](#).

Executive Order 883, *Systemwide Guidelines for Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action Programs in Employment*, supersedes Executive Order 774. The California State University is committed to maintaining and implementing employment policies and procedures that comply with applicable state and federal nondiscrimination and affirmative action laws and regulations. Discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, age, disability, medical condition, and covered veteran status is prohibited. Additionally, Executive Order 883 prohibits retaliation for filing a discrimination complaint, opposing a discriminatory act, or participating in a discrimination investigation or proceeding.

For a full description, view [Executive Order 883](#).

[NCAA Gender Equity Report](#) details information concerning SJSU's intercollegiate athletics programs under the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act of 1994.

Presidential Directive 97-03 describes the University's policies and guidelines for securing accommodations for students with disabilities, as well as the procedures for resolving disputes. It is the purpose of this directive to assure that SJSU continues to comply with federal and state legislation and California State University policies regarding the provision of services to students with disabilities.

For a full description, view [Presidential Directive 97-03](#).

Executive Order 926, The California State University Policy on Disability Support and Accommodations, presents policies, procedures, and monitoring for making all CSU programs, services, and activities accessible to students, faculty, staff, and the general public with disabilities.

For a full description, view [Executive Order 926](#).

In order to **observe days of religious significance**, students may occasionally be absent from class. Therefore, to address this issue, the San José State University Academic Council voted to adopt University Policy F68-8. This university policy, in conjunction with [California Education Code 89320](#), addresses campus policy on religious holidays.

For a full description, view [Policy F68-8](#).

Presidential Directive 91-08, *Sexual Harassment and Special Responsibilities of Supervisory and Management Personnel Having Knowledge of Potential Sexual Harassment Situation*, asserts San José State University's commitment to providing all its students and employees with a comfortable and safe environment for learning and working. The President of San José State University issued this memo to clarify for all SJSU supervisory personnel the kind of conduct that is defined as sexual harassment and the responsibilities of all supervisory personnel when they have any knowledge that sexual harassment may be taking place within the campus community.

For a full description, view [Presidential Directive 91-08](#).



School of Journalism and Mass Communications Policies

To avoid disruptions in the classroom and to foster an atmosphere for learning, the School has established the following classroom policies which apply to all classes in advertising, public relations, news editorial, radio and TV news, magazine and photojournalism.

- All cell phones must be turned off (or set to "vibrate") in the classroom. Please be forewarned that, if a cell phone goes off in class, you will be asked to leave the classroom for that particular class period.
- Latecomers may be denied entrance to the classroom. Similarly, do not disrupt the class by leaving early. Do not schedule work, personal appointments (doctor's visits), etc. so that there will be a conflict with the time the class meets.

- When in the classroom, laptops must be used for classroom-related activities only.
- Remove your personal belongings and trash from the classroom after each class.
- No food or drinks allowed in classrooms or labs.

NEED ACADEMIC ADVISING IN ADVERTISING, PUBLIC RELATIONS OR ANY JOURNALISM MAJOR ?

See our designated degree program, JMC School Academic Advisor
Dr. Kathleen Martinelli when you need a detailed update on your progress toward
graduation.

NEVER WAIT TO DO THIS...You will probably find yourself in a long waiting line!!!

The first three weeks of each semester are always super busy advising times. Expect long waiting lines if you insist on seeing her then.

GO SEE DR. MARTINELLI after the first three weeks of each semester...**during the middle of the semester when the waiting lines are not so long.**

Be sure to bring ALL your academic records (including your copy of grades or transcripts at any school.)
Never assume Dr. Martinelli has them on file or will remember your files. COME PREPARED.



[Professor Bob Rucker](#) (career info link)

His Classroom Policies: Based on Professional Standards

SJSU students are always asked to be respectful, open-minded, willing listeners and learners when it comes to experiencing people from different cultures and/or those with different perspectives. Candor is always encouraged in Rucker class discussions.

It's OK to ask for clarifications from other students and to respectfully challenge viewpoints.
Personal attacks and inappropriate language are NOT allowed.
Students who do not comply fully may be asked to leave Professor Rucker's classroom.

RUCKER CLASS STRICT ENFORCEMENT

Each of you are preparing for some career position in the future.

Professionals know basic workplace rules and regulations, established by the company or administrators, are not usually negotiable. Professionals working at all levels are expected to understand, accept and fully comply with all basic workplace directives. Penalties for violations can range from mild reprimands to docking of pay, suspensions or job termination depending on the severity of infractions. Identifying the DOs & DON'Ts is something you must learn to do while in college.

In Professor Rucker's Classes....These rules are based on this concept and will be enforced:

10 Minute Classroom Arrival Rule: Don't ever be a disruption or distraction.

No student may enter Prof. Rucker's classroom 10 minutes after class starts.

Such disruptions may result in the tardy student being asked to leave.

If a tardy student fails to comply with the directive to leave the room, that student's class participation grade can be automatically forfeited, with no make-up opportunity. Be on time.

Laptops used in class must stay focused on authorized class related materials and discussions.

Random surfing, e-mailing and all other online activities are never permitted during class time.

Expect no additional advisories or warnings. Those identified in violation of this rule will be identified in class and told to meet with Professor Rucker during office hours to learn of the penalty which could range from a grade reduction, an overall class participation grade forfeiture, or suspension from class.

NO e-mailing "I'm out Sick" messages. NO homework sent by e-mail or submitted outside of class time to Prof. Rucker without his prior consent. No credit will be given or noted.

Call Professor Rucker's office to explain you are sick, and ask for an excused absence. **408-924-3272**

Not all requests for an excused absence will be granted. SJSU policies regarding illness and family emergencies are accepted. Documentation confirmation may be requested by Prof. Rucker.

Repeated problems and excuses could result in an incomplete or failing course grade for the student.

Never ask others to inform Prof. Rucker of your illness or absence.

NO grades should be sent by e-mail or posted online for students. SJSU Privacy concerns.

If a Rucker class is assigned a separate e-mail address.

Prof. Rucker must FIRST give permission, in advance,

before any interaction, correspondence or homework may be sent to the class assigned e-mail account.

Unauthorized e-mailed materials are not acceptable and are given no credit.

Deadlines for all project, written or production, are always absolute. No excuses.

Do what is asked and expected of all students. Expect NO extensions. Ask for no special privileges.

Never expect late assignments to be accepted.

"I worked hard on this" is no excuse if you have missed the required time and way to turn in an assignment. If you want it to be counted, present it as requested.

Extra credit may be offered, but never ever expect it. Prioritize doing your best on all required class assignments, and meet designated deadlines always. "Extra Credit" is not a professional world concept.

ETHICAL VIOLATIONS WHICH SPEAK TO INDIVIDUAL INTEGRITY:

False reporting of information, unacceptable conduct or persistent unexcused absenteeism are not acceptable and will result in a grade penalty. Students may receive a failing project grade and or a failing overall course grade.

False representation of any production work required (audio, video or editing done by someone other than the student in the class) is a serious ethical violation. Without prior permission by Professor

Rucker granting special assistance, a student could forfeit anywhere from a project/assignment grade to an overall course grade.

Students are responsible for dropping courses by the SJSU semester deadline date. Never expect Professor Rucker to do this for you.

The BOTTOMLINE... Conduct yourself in a professional and honorable manner at all times. **Listen well in class & take accurate notes.** Ask clarifying questions in class. Don't wait to do it later. Do it right and thoroughly the first time.

Do what is expected of you and all students. Don't wait for someone to tell you think it through for yourself. Never ever expect special privileges

When in doubt about anything class related, **SPEAK UP in class.** Don't ever assume you can find out later or get the clarification you need from a classmate. Your classroom teacher is your most reliable source. You are paying for a class seat...USE IT to the fullest.

Never ever assume anything.

Like the old saying ...When you say "**ASSUME**" you could make an "ASS" out of "U" and "ME."